

Making Miracles Happen
Community Service Group Sets Out to Heal the World
By Nadia Ghattas
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NEW YORK – “Often when we start with one project, it develops into a whole community. Everybody, from the local level chips in and they end up with a feeling of ownership and pride,” said a member of Miracle Corners of the World (MCW).

MCW is a grassroots, not-for-profit community development and revitalization organization that has developed and assisted with numerous community projects in

Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the United States. Today, MCW has a substantial network of partners through its board of directors as well as partnering organizations and individuals who support the mission and project initiatives of the organization.

One of MCW’s past projects is the construction of a “youth village community” center in Tanzania, Africa that today serves as a resource center for both the local community and volunteers from abroad. This center offers services to over 1,000 community members a year, including a pre-school educational program, computer training, sports youth development programs, vocational, educational training—including English and French language courses—and arts and crafts supported through a community-based tourism initiative.

In 2001, MCW organized a dental outreach mission in Tanzania, treating 500 patients. Six dentists from the United States and South Africa and five dental students from New York University went back in August 2004 to treat nearly 650 patients.

“Initially we used to look for volunteers now they look for us,” said co-founder of MCW Eddie Bergman of Long Island. “I think a lot of times we underestimate the goodness of people. I think that 99 percent of the people we talk to want to help. The problem is for them to find a channel for which they can help and feel comfortable.”

In July of 2004, MCW organized their 7th International Youth Leadership Retreat. They invited 55 youths (ages 14 – 21) from almost every corner of the world, including Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, West Africa, Sierra Leon, Jordan, Israel, Palestine, New Mexico and Brazil to attend the forum which was hosted by the New York University School of Continuing and Professional Studies.

On their website, MCA said the purpose was to bring together those representing the future of today and promote a cross-cultural dialogue between the young people of the Middle East, Africa and the Americas. The educational retreats are supposed to encourage them to gain better understanding of ways to prevent or resolve conflicts.

Over twenty distinguished scholars, diplomats and business leaders donated their time over the course of seven days to participate in panels and conduct interactive workshop sessions during the retreat.

Bergman, who is only 23 now, got into community service when he was just 16. He said, there are two reasons for this: “...one is realizing the power of helping someone whom you have no connection with and who you may never see again and two, you are not helping individually but collectively. In many cases what starts as a center develops as a whole community.”

On February 16, 2005, MCW will hold a fundraising dinner at NYU. For more information visit www.miraclecorners.org.



Members of the non-profit revitalization group Miracle Corners of the World on assignment in Iringa, Tanzania.(MCW)